

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image forming portion configured to form a visible image on a recording sheet;
a sheet storing portion that sequentially feeds recording sheets to said image forming portion, said sheet storing portion comprising at least one sheet tray that stores a stack of recording sheets and is horizontally movable in any of two directions relative to a main body of the image forming apparatus, the two directions being substantially orthogonal to each other; and
a transport path that sequentially transports the recording sheets fed from the sheet storing portion to said image forming portion, said transport path being disposed near a front side of the main body of the image forming apparatus,
wherein the main body of the image forming apparatus comprises a plurality of openable covers on a front side wall thereof, and at least a part of said transport path is exposed by opening at least one of the plurality of openable covers.

Claim 2 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:
said sheet tray is provided in a tray pullout frame that is movable in one direction relative to the main body of the apparatus; and
the sheet tray is movable in a direction substantially orthogonal to the direction in which the pullout frame is pulled out relative to the main body of the apparatus.

Claim 3 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

a handle unit supported to be exposed on the outer side of the main body of the image forming apparatus and engaged with said sheet tray while said tray pullout frame is stored in the apparatus main body, wherein:

said handle unit is coupled with said sheet tray and is movable in the horizontal direction; and

when said tray pullout frame is pulled out, the sheet tray and said handle unit are disengaged.

Claim 4 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said sheet tray is movable both in the direction in which said tray pullout frame is pulled out and in the direction of the axis line orthogonal to said direction.

Claim 5 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

a transport path that transports recording sheets sequentially fed from said sheet storing portion to said image forming portion, wherein:

a plurality of said sheet trays and tray pullout frames are both placed on each other in the vertical direction, and the direction in which the tray pullout frame is pulled out coincides with the direction in which said recording sheets are fed; and

said transport path is provided so that a recording sheet fed from one sheet tray is penetrated through the tray pullout frames storing the other trays in the vertical direction.

Claim 6 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the front part of said tray pullout frame in the direction in which said tray pullout frame is pulled out is openable so that said transport path is exposed while the tray pullout frame is stored in the apparatus main body of the apparatus.

Claim 7 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a feed roll that sequentially feeds recording sheets from said sheet tray is supported by said tray pullout frame.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said sheet tray is pivotably supported in the horizontal direction around the lateral back side of the sheet tray in the direction of pulling out the sheet tray while said sheet tray is pulled out from the apparatus main body and said tray pullout frame.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein one of the rotating shaft in the vertical direction and a bearing rotatably holding the rotating shaft is fixed to said sheet tray, and the other is fixed to the apparatus main body; said rotating shaft and said bearing is movable relative to each other and detachable in the horizontal direction; and said sheet tray pivots around said rotating shaft while the rotating shaft is mounted to the bearing.

Claim 10 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an upper unit provided on a housing storing said image forming portion and said sheet storing portion, and having an operation panel, wherein

the upper unit is settable so that in which direction the front side of said operation panel is set is selectable among a plurality of directions on said housing.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming portion that forms a visible image on a recording sheet;

a sheet storing portion that stores a plurality of recording sheets and sequentially supplying recording sheets to said image forming portion; and

a transport path that transports the recording sheets sequentially supplied by said sheet storing portion to said image forming portion, wherein:

said sheet storing portion comprises a plurality of sheet trays that are placed on each other in the vertical direction and is movable in the horizontal direction relative to the apparatus main body;

the direction in which the sheet tray is pulled out coincides with the direction in which said recording sheets are fed, and the sheet tray is movable in any of two directions substantially orthogonal to each other; and

said transport path is provided to run from one tray and penetrate through the other trays in the vertical direction.

Claim 12 (Original): The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein
said front portion of said sheet tray in the direction in which said sheet tray is pulled out
is openable so that said transport path is exposed while said sheet tray is stored in the apparatus
main body.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image forming portion configured to form a visible image on a recording paper sheet;
a recording paper sheet storing portion configured to store a plurality of recording paper
sheets and sequentially feed recording paper sheets to said image forming portion;
a discharge tray provided above said image forming portion configured to hold recording
paper sheets discharged from said image forming portion;
an operation portion configured to input a driving signal for said image forming portion;
and
a paper sheet transport path configured to transport a recording paper sheet taken out
from said recording paper sheet storing portion along the front surface where said operation
portion is provided to said discharge tray through said image forming portion, wherein:
said paper sheet transport path includes a transport path cover open to the front side; and
said recording paper sheet storing portion includes a paper feed tray that is movable to a
lateral side.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said recording paper sheet storing portion includes a plurality of paper feed trays placed on each other in the vertical direction and each said paper feed tray has a handle at its front side end used to pull out the paper feed tray.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said paper feed tray is supported pivotably in the horizontal direction around the back of the paper feed tray in the tray pullout direction toward the front side of the main body of the image forming apparatus while the paper feed tray is pulled out from the image forming apparatus.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein: one of the rotating shaft in the vertical direction and a bearing holding the rotating shaft rotatably around the axis line is fixed to said paper feed tray, the other is fixed to the main body of the image forming apparatus;

said rotating shaft and said bearing is movable relative to each other in the horizontal direction and attached/detached to/from each other;

said rotating shaft is mounted to said bearing while said paper feed tray is pulled out; and said paper feed tray pivots around the rotating shaft toward the front side.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): The image forming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said transport path cover is divided into a plurality of parts in the vertical direction, each said transport path cover part is pivoted around the horizontal axis line to open the transport path,

and the height-wise sizes of said transport path cover parts are substantially the same.

Claim 18 (New): The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one sheet tray is horizontally movable in any of three directions relative to the main body of the image forming apparatus.